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permanent being in its oneness with God, but is yet concrete and uniquely characterized." This is equivalent, as far as I can see, to saying that in God the individual is preserved and not transcended, though, of course, many of his apparent qualities are only preserved in so far as they are transcended.

Now an Absolute in which the individual is an eternal and adequate manifestation of God is not even the Absolute of Mr. Bradley. It is, at the very least, the Absolute of Hegel. And surely it cannot be maintained that the conception of God in the earlier parts of the Ethics is in the least degree Hegelian. For these reasons it seems to me impossible to bring the doctrine of *scientia intuitiva* into complete harmony with the rest of the system.

I should wish to conclude, as I began, by recommending Mr. Joachim's work to every serious student of Spinoza, as a piece of work which is worthy even of such a subject.

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ROBERT BROWNING AS A RELIGIOUS TEACHER. Being the Burney Essay for 1900. By Arthur Cecil Pigou, B. A. London: C. J. Clay & Sons. Pp. xii, 132.

As Mr. Pigou hastens to explain on his first page, he has interpreted the phrase "religious teacher" in the widest possible sense, so that in expounding Browning's views on religion in its metaphysical, ethical and emotional aspects, and in attempting "to bring out the relations between them, and to unite them into some kind of system," he really aims at reconstructing for us Browning's theory of life. The objections to, and difficulties in the way of such an attempt are mostly anticipated by the essayist himself. Among objections, perhaps the most serious that could be offered against the subject as one for a prize essay, is that the ground has been already adequately covered by Prof. Henry Jones in his book on "Browning as a Religious and Philosophical Teacher." But, as Mr. Pigou points out, Prof. Jones, being himself a philosopher of the Hegelian persuasion, estimates Browning's teaching from the point of view of its correspondence with or difference from those doctrines which he holds as valid, whereas the humbler aim of this essay is to expound clearly the views held by Browning, and to criticize them, where criticism is ventured on, only on the basis of their consistency with each other.

He has, we think, succeeded in keeping to this impartial attitude, and every opinion which he attributes to Browning is justified by the passages he quotes and by many others which he might have quoted. But in the attempt "to bring out the relations between them, and to unite them into some sort of system," his success is more questionable, and of this he is evidently well aware, for he expresses his "growing conviction that his (Browning's) moods varied greatly at different times, not merely oscillating about a fixed and constant body of thought, but transforming the whole character of his outlook upon the world and making a unified philosophy impossible for him." It is indeed obvious that it is not fair to look for entire consistency with each other in views extracted from poems belonging to every possible period in a literary life of fifty-six years, from "Pauline," the work of a youth of twenty-one, to "Astralando," published on the day of his death at the age of seventy-seven.

The difficulty of distinguishing between the earlier and later stages of a man's thought is one which besets everyone who tries to write a short account of the system of a philosopher or theologian. But when it is the philosophy or theology of a poet, and that poet Robert Browning, that is in question, the matter is still more complicated. For the philosopher is at least bound as far as possible to abstract his thought, in the form in which he gives it to the world, from the influence of his own passing moods, but the poet may be optimist or cynical or depressed in turn, according to the state of the weather or his own digestion. Browning again was wont, as his biographer has told us, to lay special stress on the dramatic character of his works, and resented nothing more than the assumption that they were all revelations of personal experience.

Granting all this, however, it remains true that no poet ever left the imprint of his own personality more strongly on everything he wrote. Not only are his modes of thought as unmistakably his as his literary style, but many definite opinions and views are so predominant in his work that it is impossible not to look upon them as his conscious "message" to the world.

Most of these views and opinions seem to us, as we have already indicated, to be very fairly and clearly expounded in this Essay.

On one or two points the writer's interpretation differs somewhat from that of Mrs. Sutherland Orr, Browning's biographer, and on these we think he has the best of the argument. Although

we doubt if the poet cared very greatly whether the Gospel story was historically accurate or not, yet in the position which he gave to that story and to its Subject, he appears to have approached more closely to the doctrines of an orthodox Christianity than Mrs. Sutherland Orr will admit. There were times when, as in "La Saisiaz," he chose to put on the philosopher's cloak, and to subject his faith to a coldly rational scrutiny; and when he did this he had courage to admit that what Reason gives us is "hope—no more than hope,—but hope, no less than hope." In other moods, such as that reflected in the beautiful and sad little poem called "Fears and Scruples," not only rational proof but the instinctive, emotional certitude on which he usually relied must have failed him. But the dominant mood of his poetry is one of almost passionate affirmation of the spiritual meanings he found in experience, and above all of the promise which he thought it gave him of immortality. By this he meant, not only what R. L. Nettlehip meant by it when he wrote that eternity is the present fact, and again to a friend, "Don't bother about death; it doesn't count," but also what the ordinary man understands by it, *viz.*, the continued duration in Time of his own self-conscious personality. The strength of this conviction was, we think, the source of Browning's almost unfailing optimism,—an optimism which in those who do not share his faith is apt to produce a sense of irritation to which Rudyard Kipling gave mutely ironical expression, when he put the little song from "Pippa Passes," ending "God's in his Heaven; all's right with the world," as a motto before a gruesome story of a slum woman kicked to death by a drunken husband. But even those who find it easier to envy than to share all Browning's faith, must admit that few if any English poets could so well stand the test of an exposition in cold prose of their religious teachings.

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THE CASE FOR THE FACTORY ACTS. Edited by Mrs. Sidney Webb, with a Preface by Mrs. Humphrey Ward. Grant Richards.

This book, as its title implies, is an apology for Factory legislation. It aims at convincing and converting a particular public, the women among the leisured classes who denounce factory leg-